OM

THE HOLY RIGVEDA

With

Maharishi Dayananda's Commentary

Translated with Notes

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

The Glory of the Vedas

According to the unanimous opinion of all the seers and sages of India, including the authors of the Six systems of Philosophy known as the Darshan Shastras, the Vedas were revealed by the Omniscient God in the beginning of the human creation. The meaning of the word "Veda" is knowledge. It is derived from the root विद् (Vid) to know. By Veda we mean the knowledge given by the Omnipotent and Omniscient Lord of the universe at the commencement of the human creation for the harmonious development and guidance of mankind; As worldly parents give knowledge to their children for their welfare, so God Who is our Divine Father and Mother revealed the Eternal Truths through the Vedas for the well-being of all people. God is within and without all beings and things. The sages' hearts were pure and receptive and God inspired them with knowledge. On account of His Omnipresence and Omnipotence, God does not stand in need of paper, pen or ink, nor does He stand in need of uttering words with physical mouth like human beings. It was enough for Him to inwardly prompt the hearts of the sages in order to insil in them perfect knowledge. In the Vedas we find

our individual, domestic, social, national and intcr-national duties mentioned quite clearly for our perfect guidance.

As pointed out at the very outset, the glory of the Vedas has been sung by all the Dharmashastras or Smritis. the Shastras or Darshanas — the phiosophical work; of the medieval period.

Dharmashastras (Smritis) on the Glory of the Vedas

Manu-the first Law giver after the Vedas. has sung the glory of the Vedas in such unambiguous terms as वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम् Manu-Smriti2-6. The Veda is the source of all Dharama i.e.morality, righteousness and good conduct.धर्मं जिज्ञासमानानां, प्रमाणं परमं श्रुतिः Manu 2.3

For them who want to acquire the correct knowledge of Dharma,the Vedas are the highest authorities.

बिभर्ति सर्वभूतानि, वेदशास्त्र सनातनम्।
तस्मादेतत्परं मन्ये, यज्जन्तोरस्य साधनम् ॥Manu 12.99

The Eternal Vedas uphold all the beings (being their infallible guide). Therefore I regard it as the best means for their welfare.

The Yajvalkya Smriti on which mostly the present Hindu Law is based says -

न वेदशास्त्राादन्यत् तु, किञ्चिछास्त्रं हि विद्यते।
निस्सृतं सर्वशास्त्रं तु, वेदशास्त्रात् सनातनात्॥

There is no greater scripture than Vedas. All other scriptures are derived from and are based on Vedas.

नास्ति वेदात् परं शास्त्रं, नास्ति मातुः समो गुरुः॥ Atri Smriti 148

As there is no other greater teacher for a child than his mother, so there is no greater Scripture for any one thanVedas.

The Upanishads on the Vedas :—

The Ishopanishad on which all other Upanishads are based is the last chapter of the YajurVeda (Kanva Shakha or ascention), that is why the Upanishads are generally known by the name of the Vedanta, literally meaning the end or doctrine of the Vedas. The authors of the Upanishads who were great sages and wise men of God—realisation regarded the Vedas as Revealed Scriptures. In the Mundakopanishad 2.4 it is stated अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ, दिशः श्रोत्रे वाग् विवृताश्चवेदाः।

Fire is the head of Him (God) and His eyes are the Sun and Moon, the quarters His organs of hearing and the revealed Vedas are His voice"

(Yogi Shri Aurabindo's translation P. 107).

In the same Upanishad we are told......

तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा॥ (Mundak 2-1-7)

From Him are the hymns of the Rig Veda, the Sama and the Yajur etc.

In the Brihadaranyakpanishad which is the fourteenth and the last Kanda of the Shatapath Brahmana (which contains the exposition of the Yajur Veda) it is stated......

एतस्य वा महतो भूतस्य निःश्वसितमेतद् यद् ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः॥

(Brihadaranyak. Up. 4-5-11)

i.e. the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda are outpourings or Breath of the Supreme Being.

In the Aitareya Brahman (which contains the exposition of the Rigveda,) it is clearly stated—

प्रजापतिर्वा इमान् वेदानसृजत् ॥

God who is the Lord of the universe created or revealed these Vedas.

The Maha Bharat on the Vedas :

Maharshi (the Great Sage) Veda Vyaas has said in the Mahabharat while singing the glory of the Veda :

> अनादिनिधनानित्या, वागुत्सृष्टा स्वयम्भुवा।
> आदौ वेदमयी दिव्या, यतः सर्वा प्रवृत्तयः॥ Mahabharat 12-232-24

i.e. In the beginning of the world, Self-existent God revealed the Vedas which are Eternal and Divine. They are the Source or guides of all human activities.

Six Shastras on the Vedas :—

There are six Shastras or Systems of philosophy. All of them believe in the authority of the Vedas are Revealed by God.

Gautama the author of Nyaya Darshan (logic) says—

मन्त्रायुर्वेदप्रामाण्यवच्च तत्प्रामाण्यमाप्तप्रामाण्यात्॥ (Nyaya Shastra by the sage Gautama 2-1-67)

Wise Persons who observe truth in mind, word and deed have always accepted the authority of the Veda, that authority therefore should be admitted. One has to-uphold the authority of the Ayurveda and Mantras.

Kanada— the author of the Vaisheshik Shastra also considers that the Vedas were revealed by God and have therefore the highest authority. He Says—

> तद्वचनादाम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम्॥ Vaisheshik Shastra 1-1.

i. e. Veda being the Word of God, its authority is established.

The sage Kapila—the author of Sankhya Shastra who is erroneously considered to be an atheist also maintains :

निजशक्त्यभिव्यक्तेः स्वतः प्रामाण्यम्॥ Sankhya Shastra 5-5-1.

The Vedas having been produced by His (God's) own power, carry their authority within themselves.

The sage Patanjali—the author of the Yoga Shastra says that by giving the knowledge of all things through the Vedas, God is the First Guru or Preceptor of all our forefathers.

स एष पूर्वेषामापि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात्॥ Yoga 1-24

The most distingusihed sage Veda Vyasa — the author of the Vedanta Shastra says—

शास्त्रयोनित्वात् 1-4God being the source of all Shastras i.e. the Vedas, they carry the highest authority in themselves and being the Word of the Eternal God, the Vedas are Eternal.

Maharshi Jaimini—the author of the Meemansa Shastra says—

नित्यस्तु स्याद् दर्शनस्यपरार्थत्वात्॥ Meemansa 1-1-18.

It (Veda) is surely eternal, because it is manifested for the sake of others. It exists for ever in its own right. Since there is no human author of the Vedic texts, there is no possibility of defects and so the non-authoritiveness of the Vedas is inconceivable.

Thus we find that the authors of all the Shastras are unanimous in holding the Vedas to be revealed by God in the beginning of the Human creation. No sane person can accuse these logicians and great philosophers, of superstition and blind belief. Therefore their unanimous verdict on the

Revelation of the Vedas with strong and incontrovertible arguments must carry a great weight.

The Bhagavad Gita on the Vcdic Revelation—

The Bhagavad Gita which is one of the most popular books and which has been translated in almost all the important languages of the world on account of its popularity also sings the glory of the Vedas, regarding them as revealed by God.

Yogi Raj Shri Krishna tells Arjuna in the third chapter—

अन्नाद् भवन्ति भूतानि, पर्जन्यादन्नसंभवः।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥
कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवः विद्धि, ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भम्।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम्॥ Gita 3-14-15.

All beings are evolved from food, production of food is dependent on rain, rain ensues from Yajna (sacrifice) and sacrifice is rooted in action. Know that good action has its origin in the Vedas and the Vedas proceed from the Indestructible God, hence the All-pervading Infinite is always present in the sacrifice. Christopher Isherwood's Metrical translation of these verses may aptly be quoted here which is as follows —

Food quickens the Life-sperm,
Food grows from the rain fall
Called down out of heaven
By sacrifice offered;
Sacrifice speaks
Through the act of the ritual.
This is the ritual
Taught by the Sacred
Scriptures that spring

From the lips of the Changeless;
Know therefore that Brahman
The All-pervading
Is dwelling for ever
Within this ritual.” Bhagavad Gila or the Song of the lord. P. 46

In the 17th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna says—

ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च, यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा॥ Gita 17-23

Om, Tat, Sat, this is declared to be the three-fold designation of the Absolute. At the beginning of Creation, the Brahmanas and the Vedas, sacrifices were created by it. (Gita Press Edition).

Isherwood’s translation — Om Tat, Sat, these three words designate Brahman, by whom the seers, the Vedas and these sacrificial rites were created in ancient times.” The Song of God. .119.

Mahatma Buddha on the Vedas :

Mahatma Buddha who is erroneously considered to be an atheist or opposed to the Vedas has stated in the Sutta Nipata 292.

विद्धा च वेदेहि समेच्च धर्म्मं, न उच्चावचं गच्छति भूरि पंजो।
संस्कृत छाया विद्वांश्च वेदैः समेत्यधर्मं, नोच्चावचं गच्छति भूरिप्रज्ञः॥

He who attains true knowledge of Dharma or righteousness through the Vedas, attains a steady position. He does not waver. This shows Mahatma Buddha’s very great regard for the Vedas. It also shows that the Mahatma regarded the Vedas as the source of Dharma; Can such a believer in the Vedas be ever called an atheist ?

Lavi-art Arabian Poet on the Vedas:—

Lavi-an Arabian Poet (170 B. C) sang the glory of the Vedas in the following manner in Arabian Verses which mean—

"O blessed land of Hind (India) thou art worthy of reverence, for in thee has God revealed True knowledge of Himself.

What a pure light do these four revealed books afford to our mind's eyes like the charming and cool luster of the dawn.

These four, God revealed unto his prophets (Rishis) in Hind. And He thus teaches all races of mankind that inhabit the earth.

Observe (in your lives) the knowledge I (God) have revealed in the Vedas, for surely God has revealed them.

Those treasures are the Sama and Yajur which God has preached, O my brothers, revere these, for they tell us the good news of salvation.

The two next, of these four Rigved and Atharvaved teach us lessons of Universal brotherhood. These two (Vedas) are the beacons that warn us to turn towards the Goal (Universal brotherhood.)

Guru Nanak Ji and other Sikh Gurus on the Vedas —

Guru Nanak Ji sang the glory of the Vedas regarding them as Revealed by God, as the following passages of the Granth Sahib clearly show-

ओंकार वेद निरमाये॥ गुरुग्रन्थ महला ओंकार शब्द

The Vedas were made or revealed by God.

हरि आज्ञा होए वेद, पाप पुन्नविचारिया॥ महला ५ शब्द

The Vedas were revealed under the orders of God, so that human beings could distinguish between sins and merits.

सामवेद ऋग जजुर अथर्वण, ब्रह्मे मुख मा इयाहै त्रैगुण।
ताकी कीमत कीत कह न सकै, कौ तिउ बोले जिउ बोलाइदा ॥
महला १ शब्द १७॥

Samaveda, Rigveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda have been revealed by God. No one can evaluate their importance. They are inestimable and eternal.

ओंकार उत्पाती। चार वेद चार खाणी॥ महला ५ शब्द १७

Four Vedas are four treasures given by God.

वेद बखान कहहि इक कहिये, ओह बेअन्त अन्त किन लहिये॥
वसन्त अष्टपदिया महला १ ब० ३।

How can one praise the holy Vedas ? They are endless. How can their end be found ?

(Extracts from Guru Granth Saheb - the Sikh Scripture).

दीवा जले अन्धेरा जाई। वेद पाठ मति पापा लाई

As there can be no dark under the candle, so the study of the Vedas destroys all sinful thoughts of the intellect.

अंसख ग्रन्थ मुखि वेदपाठ॥

Though there are numberless books, the recitation and study of the Vedas stands first in the order of merit.

Saint Kabir on the Vedic Truth-

वेद कतेब कहहु मत झूठे, झूठा जो न विचारे॥
गुरुग्रन्थ साहेब राग प्रभाती कबीर जी शब्द ३।

Do not say that the Vedas are false. Liars are those who do not try to understand the Vedas.

Jain Acharya Kumudendu on the Vedas—

The Rig Veda is eternal and the Word of the Omniscient in the beginning. Various languages have been derived from it. The message of the omniscient Supreme being (सर्वज्ञ देव) is one and the same for the speakers of all languages. (Bhoovalaya Chap. 6 Verse 2-6)

Dara Shikoh On the Vedas —

Dara Shikoh (Son of Shahjahan and elder brother of Aurangzeb) wrote in his Persian translation of the Upanishads.

"After gradual research; I have come to the conclusion that long before all heavenly books, God had revealed to the Hindus, through the Rishis of yore, of whom Brahma was the Chief, His four books of knowledge, the Rig Veda, the Yajurveda, the Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda.

A Parsi scholar on the Vcdas-

Dada Chanji, B. A., LL. B., D. Th (A, great Parsi Scholar, writes in the Philosophy of Zoroastrianiasm and comparative study of Religions. —

"The Veda is a book of knowledge and wisdom comprising the Book of nature, the Book of religion, the Book of prayers, the Book of morals and so on. The word "Veda" means wit, wisdom, knowledge and truly the Veda is condensed wit, wisdom and knowledge. The Vedas teach nothing but mono-theism of the purest kind." (The Philosophy of Zoroastrianism and Comparative Study of Religions P. 100.)

Some impartial Western Scholars on the Vedas —

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace - co-originator of the Physical Evolution Theory wrote in "Social Environment and Moral Progress" strongly refuting the social and moral evolution theory- "In the earliest records which have come down to us from the past, we find ample indications

that accepted standard of morality and the conduct resulting from these were in no degree inferior to those which prevail today, though in some respects, they were different from ours. The wonderful collection of hymns known as the Vedas is a vast system of religious teachings as pure and lofty as those of the finest portions of the Hebrew Scriptures. Its authors were fully our equals in their conception of the universe and the Deity expressed in the finest poetic language."

"In it (Veda) we find many of the essential teachings of the most advanced religious thinkers." P. 1

"We must admit that the mind which conceived and expressed in appropriate language, such ideas as are everywhere present in those Vedic hymns, could not have been inferior to those of the best of our religious teachers and poets to our Milton, Shakespeare and Tennyson." (Social Environment and Moral Progress by Alfred Russel Wallace P. 14).

The Social Evolution Theory falls to the ground when as rightly asserted by Dr. A. R. Wallace-one of the originators of the Physical Evolution Theory, Veda admittedly the oldest book in the library of mankind contains the "essential teachings of the most advanced religious thinkers and is a vast system of religious teachings which are pure and lofty." This is in fact, the best testimony to the Vedic Revelation Theory.

Nobel Prize Winner Mater link on the Vedic Ethics—

Mr. Materlink — a Nobel prize winner Philosopher of Sweden, giving a few extracts from the Vedas and allied literature wrote in the ''Great Secret."

"Let us agree that this system of Ethics of which I have been unable to give more than the slightest survey, while the first ever known to man, is also the loftiest which he has ever practised." (The Great Secret P. 96)

"As for the primitive tradition, it is true that these affirmations and precepts arc the most unlooked for, the loftiest, the most admirable and most plausible that mankind has hitherto known."(P.57)

"This tradition attributes to the vast reservoir of the Wisdom that somewhere look shape simultaneously with the origin of man — to more spiritual entities, to beings less entangled in matter."

(The Great Secret by Materlink rologue . 6)

This cuts at the root of the Social Evolution theory. If the ethical and moral teachings of the Vedas which are admittedly the oldest books in the library of mankind, are also the loftiest, the most admirable and the most plausible that mankind has hitherto known, as rightly asserted by Mr. Materlink, then how can the Social Evolution They stand according to which the teachings of the oldest book should have been the most absurd and stupid ?

Count Lo Tolstoy on the sublimity of the Vedas —

Giving the world famous Tolstoy's views on the Vedas and the Upanishads, Mr. Alexander Shifman Research Scholar of Tolstoy Museum in Moscow wrote in his article entitled "Leo Tolstoy and the Indian Epics" published in several papers and magazines during Tolstoy Century Celebrations in 1963.

"Leo Tolstoy was deeply interested in ancient Indian literature and its great epics. The themes of the Vedas were the first to attract his attention. "Appreciating the profundity of the Vedas, Tolstoy gave particular attention to those cantos which deal with the problem of ethics, a subject in which interested him deeply. He subscribed to the idea of human love which pervades the Vedas, with their humanism and praise of peaceful labour. Tolstoy the artist was moreover delighted with the poetic treasures

and artistic imagery which distinguish those outstanding Indian Epics." He (Tolstoy) ranked the Vedas and their later interpretations — the Upanishads with those perfected works of world art which have never failed to appeal to all nationalities in all epochs and which therefore represent true art."

"Tolstoy not only read the Vedas, but also spread their teachings in Russia. He included many of the sayings of the Vedas and the Upanishads in his collections "Range of Reading" Thoughts of wise men" and others."

Two reverend gentlemen on the Vedas—

Rev. Morris Philip - a Christian Missionary in his well-known book named "The Teachings of the Vedas" strongly refuting the Evolution Theory writes —

"We have pushed our enquiries as far back in time as the records would permit and we have found that the religious and speculative thought of the people was far purer, simpler and more rational at the farthest point we reached, than at the nearest and the latest in the Vedic Age." The conclusion therefore is inevitable viz. that the development of religious thought in India has been uniformly downward and not upward, deterioration and not evolution. We are justified therefore in concluding that the higher and purer conceptions of the Vedic Aryans were the results of a Primitive Divine Revelation."

(The Teachings of the Vedas by Rev. Morris Philip. P. 23)

This admission on the part of a Christian Missionary for the Vedas as Primitive Divine Revelation is very significant. Prof. Heeren on the Vedas—

"The Vedas stand alone in their solitary splendour, standing as beacons of Divine Light for onward march of humanity."

(Historical Researches by Prof. Heeren Vol. II, P. 127).

Mons, Leon Delbos — a French Scholar in the course of a paper read by him before the International Literary Association at Paris on 14th July 1884 declared unhesitatingly—

"The Rig Veda is the most sublime conception of the great high ways of humanity."

Thoreau (American Sage) on the Vedas—

"What extracts from the Vedas I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary which describes a loftier course through a purer stratum-free from particulars, simple, universal. The Vedas contain a sensible account of God." (Quoted here from "Mother America" by Swami Omkar P. 9)

Mr. Boulanger — a Russian Scholar on the Vedas—

Mr. Boulanger — a Russian Scholar, Editor of the Sacred Books of the East Series in Russian, wrote thus in his preface—

"What struck me in Maxmuller's translation was a lot of absurdities, obscene passages and a lot of what is not lucid."

"As far as I can grasp the teaching of the Vedas, it is so sublime that 1 would look upon it as a crime on my part, if the Russian public become acquainted with it through the Medium of confused and distorted translation, thus not deriving for its soul that benefit which this teaching should give to the people." (Quoted hero from Sadhu T. L. Vaswani's Torch bearer P. 143).

Regarding Prof. Maxmuller who was considered to be the most prominent orientalist of his day, it will not be out of place to show from the letters written by him to the Duke of Orgoil and his wife, that he had

rather an ulterior motive in translating the Vedas and writing other books on them.

In a letter addressed to Duke of Orgoil - then the Secretary of State for India, Prof. Maxmullcr wrote on 16th December, 1868—

“The ancient religion of India is doomed and if Christianity does not step in whose fault will it be ?"

In a letter addressed to his wife in 1868 Prof. Maxmullcr wrote—

I hope, I shall finish that work (Editing and translating the Rigveda) and I feel convinced that though I shall not live to see it, yet this edition of mine (of the Rigveda) and the translation of the Vedas will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of souls in that country. “It (Veda) is the root of their religion and to show them what the root is, I feel sure, the only way of uprooting all that has been sprung from it during the last three thousand years.”

So it is just with the motive of uprooting the Vedas, that Prof. Maxmuller though a staunch Christian, undertook the stupendous task of editing and translating the Vedas. The letter written by Mr. E. B. Pussey — an intimate friend of Maxmuiler also shows that his friends knew and highly appreciated his motive.

Mr. Pussey wrote—

“Your work will form a new era in the efforts for the conversion of India, and Oxford will have reason to be thankful that by giving you a home, it will have facilitated a work of such primary and lasting importance on the conversion of India, and which by enabling us to compare that early “false religion” with the true, illustrates the more than blessedness of what we enjoy.”

(Mr. ,E. B. Pusscy’s letter to Prof. Maxmuiler.)

It is, therefore, not' surprising as remarked by Mr. Boulanger that "In Maxmuller's translation of the Vedas, there was a lot of absurdities, obscene passages and a lot of what is not lucid ! The same is the case with Macdonell, Keith and many other Western Scholars who were the occupants of the Chair of Oriental studies at the Oxford University under Boden Trust, whose Chief object was as follows as given by Monior Williams in the Introduction to his well – known Sanskrit English Dictionary —

"That the special object of his (Boden's) munificent bequest was to promote the translation of the Scriptures into Sanskrit, so as to enable his countrymen to proceed in the "Conversion of the natives of India to the Christian religion."

Is it surprising then when we find Monior Williams writing "In Modern India and the Indians." That "When the walls of the Mighty fortress of Brahmanism arc encircled, undermined and finally stormed by the soldiers of the cross, the Victory of Christianity must be signal and complete."

(Monior Williams in Modern India and the Indians, 247, 3rd. Edition.)

Shri Aurabindo was therefore right when in his essay on "Dayananda and the Veda" he remarked with regard to the interpretation put by Prof. Maxmuller and his followers (All of course do not come under that category as quotations given by us in this chapter from the writings of some impartial Western Scholars clearly show).

"If there ever was a toil of interpretation in which the loosest rein has been given to an ingenious speculation, in which doubtful indications have been snatched at as certain proofs, in which the boldest conclusions have been insisted upon with the scantiest justification, the most enormous difficulties ignored and preconceived prejudice maintained in face of the clear and often admitted suggestions of the text, it is surely

this labour so eminently respectable otherwise for its industry, good will and power of research, performed through a long century by European Vedic Scholarship." (Bankim, Tilak and Dayananda by Yogi Shri Aurabindo. P. 52).

Let us leave this unpleasant matter here which had to be briefly dealt with to elucidate the remarks of Mr. Boulanger.

Mr. Edward Carpenter on the Vedic Philosophy —

Mr. Edward Carpenter, a distinguished sage of the West, in his illustrious work "Art of Creation" gives expression to the following ideas—

"A new philosophy we can hardly expect or wish for, since, the same germinal thoughts of the Vedic Authors have come all the way down history, even to Shopenhauer and Whitman, inspiring philosophy after philosophy, religion after religion. Science is able to provide for these world-old principles somewhat of a new form and so wonderful a garment for illustration and exposition as it does." (The Art of Creation by Edward Carpenter).

It is this Universal Character of the Vedic Teachings with most sensible and rational account or conception of God that distinguishes them from other "Scriptures."

Dr. James Cousins on the Vedic Ideal :—

Dr. Jamus Cousins D. Litt.—an eminent Irish poet, artist and philosopher, in his excellent book "Path to Peace," expressed himself thus with regard to the Vedic Ideal and Culture:—

"To love, to think, to do, are in the Vedic conception, no transitory futilities touched with melancholy, but stimulations of the cosmic activity charged with the joy of the Eternal. Shadows they are, dancing shadows cast by the Light of lights."

"But they are cast by the light, not by darkness and in the Light, that vision of the Eternal, shining through the temporal, humanity can find an ideal which would replace a periodical sanctimoniousness by a perpetual sense of the sanctity of all life."

"On that (Vedic) ideal alone, with its inclusiveness which absorbs and annihilates the causes of antagonisms, its sympathy which wins hatred away from itself is it possible to rear a new earth in the image and likeness of the Eternal Heavens." (The Path of Peace by Dr. James Cousins P. 60)

Mr. Mascaro M. A. on the Vedas —

Mr. J. Mascaro M. A. Reader of English, University of Barcelors says in "The Himalayas of the Soul—"

"If a Bible of India were compiled, eternal treasures of old wisdom and poetry would enrich the times of to-day. Among those compositions, some of them living words before writing was introduced, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gila would rise above the rest like Himalayas of the spirit of man" (The Himalayas of the Soul by J. Mascaro M. A. P. 151).

Brunhofer on Vedic Poetry—

Brunhofer — a German Poet was constrained to exclaim:

"The Veda is like the lark's morning trill of humanity, awaking to the consciousness of its greatness." (quoted here from "The Mystic Approach to the Vedas by Shri M. P. Pandit P. 2)

Many more quotations can be added, but they are sufficient to convince the readers that the glory of the Vedas has been sung not only by the Sages and seers of India, but by many impartial scholars of all countries. Rishi Dayananda Sarasvati the greatest Vedic Scholar of this age was therefore right in his Clarion Call of "Back to the Vedas" declaring at

the top of his voice. "The Vedas are the Scriptures of all true knowledge, It is the paramount duty of all Aryas (righteous persons) to read them, to teach them to others, to hear them read and to recite them." (The 2nd Principle of the Arya Samaj)

CHAPTER II

Why to sing the Glory of the Vedas!

The distinguishing features of the Vedic teachings on account of which, their glory is not only sung by all the seers, sages and philosophers of India, but many impartial Western Scholars are the following.

(1) The Vedic Dharma teaches harmony between knowledge and action, considering the combination of both, essential for the attainment of emancipation.

(2) It advocates harmony between renunciation and enjoyment, enjoining upon us the middle path expressed in the most un-ambiguous terms like.

तेन त्यक्तेन भुजीथा मा गृधःकस्यस्विद् धनम् ॥ (Yajur Veda 40-1)

i.e. Enjoy things of this world with the spirit of renunciation in you. Don't be greedy. Whose wealth is all this ? It is all God's. Regard yourselves only Trustees and not owners of the wealth. Some sects like Charvaka preach the materialistic principle of "Eat, drink and be merry, because to-morrow we may die." Some others like Buddhism, Neo-Vedanta,

Charistianity etc. lay all stress on renunciation saying like Jesus that "It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God' Mat. 23-17. But the Vedic Dharma

teaches the Middle Path as pointed out above and this is its distinguishing feature.

(3) The Vedas advocate the claims of reconciliation between individualism and Socialism," laying stress on the combination of both असम्भूति or individual all-round progress and सम्भूति Social Collective Welfare as the right path, as stated in the Yajur Veda.

> सम्भूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तस्तद्वेदोभयं सह।
> विनाशेन मृत्यु तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्याऽमृतमश्नुते॥ (Yajurveda 40-11)

(4) The Vedas lay stress upon harmony between faith and Reason by enjoining upon us the cultivation of both, praying for the development of both and by conducting ourselves in such a way that both these faculties may go hand in hand.

> अग्ने समिधमाहार्ष बृहते जातवेदसे।
> स मे श्रद्धां च मेधां च जातवेदाः प्रयच्छतु॥ AtharvaVeda 19-64

Such Mantras are very significant in this connection. There we pray to the Omnipresent and Omnipotent God to endow us with Faith and Pure Reason at the same time. It is also to be borne in mind that the Shraddha which we are asked to cultivate is not blind belief, but the power of grasping and upholding the truth वश्रत् इति सत्यनाम (निघण्टु ३.१०) According to the Vedic Lexicon named Nighantu, Shrat means truth, the root (Dha) means to uphold or support. Therefore Sharaddha means that which upholds or supports truth. It is not superstition, as generally it is considered to be.

For instance in religions like Christianity and Islam, the greatest stress is laid on faith in Jesus Christ and Mohammed Saheb and we are asked to believe in their teachings implicitly. To argue in these religious matters is considered to be sinful. That is why many irrational dogmas like Trinity.

Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, Resurrection and Redemption by Grace are believed by devout followers of these religions. There are the instances of Hipatia, Arius, Nestor, Palagious, and many others who had to lay down their lives or whose property was confiscated for exercising their reasoning power against the dogmas of Orthodox Christianity and Islam. But that is not the case with Vedic Dharma. It does not condemn or look down upon reason. In Mantras like मूर्धानमस्य संसीव्याथर्वा हृदयं च यत् Atharva 10-2-26) the Vedas enjoin upon us to stitch or knit together our hearts (the Centre of faith and love) with our brains (the Centre of reason). There could not be greater emphasis on the harmony between faith and reason than expressed in this poetical figure. This is the most important distinguishing feature of the Dharma, taught by the Vedas. It is therefore, but in the fitness of things that their glory has been sung by all the seers and philosophers alike.

(5) The fifth distinguishing feature of the religion taught by the Vedas is that in it Religion and Science are properly harmonised. The Veda is the origin, not only of religion, morality and Ethics, but also of sciences.

Even some impartial Western Scholars have expressed this distinguishing feature of the Vedas with great surprise. For instances (I) Mr. W. D. Brown in his famous book "The superiority of the Vedic Religion" referring to the Vedic Religion says

It (Vedic Religion) recognises but One God. It is a Thoroughly scientific religion where religion and Science meet hand in hand.

Here, Theology is based upon science and philosophy.

(Superiority of the Vedic Religion by W. D. Brown).

(2) French Savant Jacolliot in his well-known work "The Bible in India" comparing the different accounts of the origin of the universe exclaims

"Astonishing fact ! The Hindu Revelation (Veda) is of all Revelations the only one whose ideas are in perfect harmony with modern science, as it proclaims the slow and gradual formation of the world."

(The Bible in India Vol. II, Chap. I).

(3) Mrs. Wheeler Willox—an American lady says—

"We have all heard and read about the ancient religion of India. It is the land of the great Vedas the most remarkable works containing not only religious ideas for a perfect life, but also facts which all the science has since proved true. Electricity, Radium, Electrons, Airships, all seem to be known to the sires who found the Vedas."

(4) Even Prof. Maxmullcr in his "Biographical Essays" referring to Rishi Dayananda's interpretation of the Vedas, which was based upon the ancient authorities, observes —

"To Swami Dayananda, everything contained in the Vedas was not only perfect truth, but he went one step further and by their interpretation, succeeded in persuading others that everything worth knowing, even the most recent inventions of modern science were alluded to in the Vedas. Steam Engines, Electricity, Telegraphy and Wireless Marconogram were shown to have been at least in the germs known to the poets of the Vedas."

Let me close this part of the chapter with the views expressed by an impartial thinker and philosopher of world-wide reputation as Yogi Shri Aurabindo. In the course of his well - known essay on "Dayananda and the Veda" Shri Aurabindo remarked—

"There is nothing fantaslic in Dayananda's idea that Veda contains truth of science as well as truth of religion. I will even add my own conviction that Veda contains other truths of a Science the Modern World does not

at all possess, and in that case, Dayananda has rather understated than overstated the depth and range of the Vedic Wisdom." (Bankim—Tilak-Dayananda by Shri Aurabindo, Shri Aurabindo Ashrama, Pondichery P. 57).

Those who would like to know more about the various sciences in the Vedas, should read books like "The Vedic Fathers of Geology" and "Vedic India—Mother of Parliaments" by the Maha Rashtrian Scholar Shri N. B. Rao Pavagi, The Vedic Gods—as figures of Biology by Dr. V. G. Rele L. M. F., S.F.C.P.P.S. "Introduction to the Message of the 20lh Century by P. Narayana Gowda M.A. B.Sc, "The Riks" by Parama Shiva Iyer, The Sciences in the Vedas by Shri Hans Raj; "Material Sciences in the Vedas" by Shri Panna Lal Parihar, B. A., LL. B., "Sciences in the Vedas Part 1—2 compiled by Shri Divan Rama Nath Kashyap, "Sciences in the Vedas" by Acharya Vaidya Nath ji Shastri and other books in English besides many books in Hindi.

Some distinguished Scholars' Views regarding Science in the Vedas

(I) Pandit Satya Vrat Samashramtm, M.R.A.S wrote in his preface to Trayi Bhasha (in Bengali.)

"This fourfold Trayi is the repository of all Aryan knowledge whether theological, practical. Scientific, Ethical and Social."

Our opinion is that in Vedic Times, our country had made extra-ordinary progress. In those days, the Sciences of Geology, Astronomy and Chemistry were called "Adhidaivik Vidyas" and those of physiology. Psychology and Theology. "Adhyatma Vidya" Though the works embodying the scientific knowledge of those times arc entirely lost, there

are sufficient indications in Vedic works of those sciences having been widely known in those days.

The study of certain portions of the Vedas leads even to the conclusion that certain scientific research had been carried in this country to such perfection that, not to speak of this moribund country, even America, the constant source of scientific discoveries, and the advanced countries of Europe have not yet attained it. It is this which make; it impossible for us to understand the real purport of such passages."

(Trayi Bhasha Introduction P. 8-9)

(2) Shri Narayan Rao Bhawani Rao Pavagi - an illustrious scholar of Maharashtra wrote in his famous book "Vedic Fathers of Geology."

"1 may take this opportunity to remind the reader, without fear of contradiction that the Vedas contain many things not yet known to anybody, as they form a mine of inexhaustible literary wealth, that has only partially been opened and has still remained unexplored." (The Vedic Fathers of Geology by N. B. Pavagi Introduction P. VI).

Sri Pavagi also wrote in his "Self Government in Ancient India and Vedic India-Mother of Parliaments "The Veda is the fountain head of knowledge, the prime source of inspiration, the grand repository of pithy passages of Divine Wisdom and even Eternal Truths." (Vedic India P. 136.)

(3) Dr. V. G. Rale. L.M.I.S., F. C. P. S. wrote in -Vedic Gods - as figure of Biology."

"Our present anatomical knowledge of the nervous system tallies so accurately with the literal description of the world given in the Rigveda that a question arises in the mind whether the Vedas are really religious books or whether they arc books on anatomy and physiology of the

nervous system without the thorough knowledge of which, psychological deductions and philosophical Speculations cannot be correctly made." (The Vedic Gods by Dr. V. G. Rele P. 30).

(4) Shri Narayan Gowda M. A., B. Sc. wrote in "Introduction of the Message of the 20th Century" - Proving that the Vedas are treatise on the exact sciences.

"The Rigveda deals with the Theorems and experiments, while the process of preparing the reagents and apparatus is recorded in the Yajurveda which is in effect a laboratory guide."

(5) His Holiness Shri Jagad Guru Shankaracharya, Shri Bharati Krishna Tirth Puri.

Author's Preface for Vedic Mathematics

By Jagadguru Shankaracharya ji of Puri — Astounding wonders of Ancient Indian Vedic Mathematics.

(I) The very word "VEDA" has this derivational meaning i.e. the fountain head and illimitable store-house of all knowledge. This derivation, in effect means, connotes and implies that the Vedas should contain within themselves all the knowledge needed by mankind - relating not only to the so-called spiritual (or other worldly) matter but also to those usually described as purely secular, temporal or worldly: and also to the means required by humanity as such for the achievement of all-round, complete and perfect success in all conceivable directions and there can be no adjectival or restrictive, epithet calculated (or tending) to limit that knowledge down in any sphere, any direction or any respect whatsoever.

(II) In other words, it connote:, and implies that our ancient Indian Vedic lore should be all-round, complete and perfect and able to throw the

fullest necessary light on all matters which any aspiring seeker after knowledge can possibly seek to be enlightened upon. (Preface P. XIII.)

(III) It is thus in the fitness of things that the Vedas include Ayurveda (anatomy, physiology, hygiene, sanitary science, medical science, surgery etc. not for the purpose of achieving perfect health and strength in the after-death future but in order to attain them here and now in our present physical bodies: (ii) Dhanur-VcJa (archery and other Military Sciences) not for fighting with one another after our transportation to heaven but in order to quell, subdue all invaders from abroad and all insurgents from within (iii) Gandharva Veda (the Science and art of Music) and (iv) Sthapatya Veda (engineering, architecture etc. and all branches of mathematics in general.) All these subjects, be it noted, are inherent parts of the Vedas i.e. are reckoned as "spiritual studies" and catered for as such therein.

(IV) Similar is the case with regard to the Vedangas i.e. grammar, prosody, astronomy, lexicography etc. which, according to the Indian Cultural conceptions, are also inherent parts and subjects of the Vedic (i.e. Religious) study.

(V) As a direct and unshakable consequence of this analytical and grammatical study of the real connotation and full implications of the word "Veda" and owing to various other historical causes, we have been from our very early childhood, most earnestly and actively striving to study the Vedas critically from this standpoint and to realise and prove to ourselves (and to others) the correctness (or otherwise) of the derivative meaning in question. (Preface P. XIV.)

(VI) The contemptuous attitude adopted by some so-called orientalists merely added fuel to the fire (so to speak) and further confirmed and strengthened our resolute determination to unveil the too-long hidden

mysteries of philosophy and science contained in the ancient India's Vedic lore, with the consequence that, after eight years of concentrated contemplation in forest-solitude, we were at long last able to recover the long lost keys which alone could unlock the portals thereof.

(VII) And we were agreeably astonished and intensely gratified to find that exceedingly tough mathematical problems (which the mathematically most advanced present day western scientific world had spent huge lots of time energy and money on and which even now it solves with the utmost difficulty and after vast labour involving large number of difficult tedious and combursome steps of working) can be easily and readily solved with the help of these ultra easy Vedic-sutras (or Mathematical aphorisms) contained in the Parishishta (the Appendix portion) of the Atharva Veda in a few simple steps and by methods which can be conscientiously described as mere Mental Arithmetic. (P. VV)

These extracts from the writings of some distinguished scholars of India (including the late Shankaracharya ji of Puri) clearly substantiate Rishi Dayananda Sarasvati's idea that the Vedas are the origin of not only religion but also of science. Those who want to read Maharishi Dayananda Sarasvati's views on this and other Vedic subjects must study his most scholarly work named translated into English by Pt. Ghasi Ram Ji M. A. and published by the Sarvadeshik Arya pratinidhi Sabha, Ramlila Maidan New Delhi.

Unfortunately, there has been a great conflict between religions like Christianity and Islam on the one hand and Science on the other. In books like "History of the Conflict between Religion and Science" by William Draper M.A.,D.D. we find thousands of instances of such conflict. The great Scientists like Galelio and Bruno were persecuted for preaching Scientific principles like the earth revolving round the sun and plurality

of the world which were declared by the inquisition Court to be "foolish." absurd, false in Theology and heretical because expressly contrary to the Holy Scriptures."

But the Vedas teach not only spiritual truths but also scientific truths for the material advancement of mankind. Therein lies the greatness and glory of the Vedas and the Universal, Philosophical, rational and Scientific religion preached by them.

CHAPTER III

The Necessity and Tests of Revelation.

We have already pointed out the necessity of Revelation in the beginning of the first chapter of this introduction saying "As worldly parents give knowledge to their children for their welfare, so God who is our Divine Father and Mother revealed the Eternal Truths through the Vedas for the well-being of all people," It is the common experience of all, that none can learn anything of importance, unless he is taught by anyone. Had it not been so, there would not have been, any necessity of sending children to schools or colleges to learn. Several experiments were performed by the Pranimcticusus of Egypt, King Asurbani Pal of Assyria, Swebian Emperor Frederic II James IV of Scotland and Akbar the Great of India. The last is said to have shut up thirty children before they could speak and put guards over them so that nurses might not teach them their language. At twelve years of age, the children were before the Emperor and a great assembly of linguists. Everyone was astonished to find that they did not speak any language at all. How remarkable are the following words of the famous Greek Philosopher Plato who said—

"We will wait for one, be he a God or an inspired man to instruct us in religious duties and to take away the darkness from our eyes."

"Plato's Alcibiades."

In Phaedo the same philosopher says—

"We must seize upon the best human views in navigating the dangerous sea of life, if there is no safer or less perilous way, no stouter vessel or Divine Revelation for making this Voyage" (Plato's Phaedo). Socrates— the best among the wise men of Greece said the same thing differently as follows-

"You may resign yourself to sleep and give yourself up to despair, unless God in His Goodness, shall vouchsafe to send you instruction." (Quoted here from "The Brahmo Samaj and Eclectic System" Madras P. 84).

Dr. Fleming M A., D. Sc., F.R.S. a distinguished Scientist pointed out the necessity of Revelation in the course of a lecture delivered by him in November 1914 at London during the Science Week in the following memorable words.

"If we are to obtain more solid assurance, it cannot come to the mind of man groping feebly in the dim light of un-assisted reason, but only a communication made directly from this Supreme Mind to the finite mind of man." (Science and Religion by Seven Men of Science — Lecture delivered by Dr. Fleming M. A. D.Sc, F. R.S. P. 53).

Every book that professes to be Revealed or inspired, must fulfill at least the following conditions.

(1) It must be revealed in the very beginning of the human creation. God is the Father of all beings. He is impartial to all His children. He reveals knowledge for the common good of all. If God does not reveal the Eternal Truths, the unaided intellect of a man cannot grasp them. It is

clear therefore that God's revealed the eternal Truths in the beginning of the human creation. Prof. Maxmuller though a staunch Christian realised the force of this argument and wrote these remarkable words in his famous book 'Science of Religion' "If there is a God who has created heaven and earth, it will be unjust on His part if He deprived millions of souls born before Moses of His Divine Knowledge. Reason and comparative study of Religions declare that God gives His Divine Knowledge to mankind from his first appearance on earth." (Prof. Maxmuller in "The Science of Religion")

That the Vedas were revealed in the beginning of human creation is the unanimous view of all the sages and seers of India. The Rishis we're not the composers of the Mantras, but the persons who made out their secrets and preached them to others. The Vedas being eternal, there cannot be any historical references in them. We shall throw some light on this when dealing with the question of the "Rishis" of the Mantras.

(2) The second chief test of Revelation is that there should be no contradictions in it. Now everyone who has impartially read the Bible, must have seen that the teachings of Moses, as given in the Old Testament are in many respects contradicted by Jesus in the New Testament. For instance, we read in Matt. 5.31. It hath been said –

"Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committed adultery."

Then again in Matt. 5-38. 3 we read—

"Ye have heard that it hath been said. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, Ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right check, turn to him the other also."

Other passages also can be quoted to show how the teachings of the Old and the New Testaments differ from each other. That Omniscient God should fall in need of changing His words in the form of the Old and New Testaments is in itself a wonderful thing which cannot be accounted for.

Let me quote in this connection the following passages from Rev. Sunderland's 'The Origin and Character of the Bible." Rev. Sunderland clearly admits:—

Both Testaments contain numerous contradictions. These furnish evidence so incontrovertible on the question before us that we shall cite considerable number.

"Attention is called to the contradiction between 2 Sam. XXIV1 and I Chronicle XXI. 1. In one of these passages, we are told that it was the Lord and in the other that it was Satan, who prompted David to do a certain thing, to number or take Census of Israel. Of course, both statements cannot be true, unless the Lord and the Satan are the same being." (Origin and Character of the Bible by Rev Sunderland P. 252-253).

Now when we come to the four Gospels of the New Testament, we are surprised to see many discrepancies in them.

The teachings of the first three synoptical Gospels are in many respects fundamentally different from those of the fourth Gospel. While the first three Gospels lay stress on the purity of heart and other ethical virtues, the fourth Gospel (John) lays emphasis on the absolute faith in the name of the only begotten son of God, without which a man is doomed to hell as he says -

“He that believeth on Him (Jesus Christ) is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.” John 3-18).

Rev. Sunderland un-ambiguously states as follows on this point :—

“So very marked and significant are contradictions between the first three Gospels and the fourth, that if the former are to be taken as giving in main a true picture, the latter can neither, be historical nor the production of an eye witness.” (Origin and Character of the Bible).

In the first place, no inspiration is required to write a history. In the second place, taking for granted that an inspiration is required to write a history, we cannot conceive that God inspired the Evangelists in such a strange manner that they gave contradictory accounts of the same events in so many place. Thomas Paine has rightly remarked in his most remarkable and distinguished book named “The Age of Reason.”

“Revelation is a communication of something which the person to whom the thing is revealed did not know before. For if I have done, a thing, or seen it done, it needs no Revelation to tell me. I have done or seen it done nor enable me to tell it or write it. Revelation therefore cannot be applied to anything done upon earth, of which man is himself actor or witness and consequently all the historical part of the Bible which is almost the whole of it, is not within the meaning and compass of the word Revelation and therefore is not the Word of God.” (The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine P II).

The same argument holds good with regard to Zend Avesta, the Holy Quran and other Scriptures of various sects where the life and teachings of their founders are given. The Vedas being eternal are free from any such historical references.

3. The third Chief test of Revelation is that it should not be opposed to Science and reason. It has been pointed out how in the Bible, there are many things which are opposed to reason and Science and that is why many great scientists like Gablio, Bruno and others and eminent philosophers like Hipatia were persecuted by the Christian Church for preaching Scientific principles like the revolution of the earth round the sun and plurality of worlds etc.

Dr. Barnes Bishop of Birmingham in the course of a Broadcast Address on Religion and Science stated in unambiguous terms that –

“Now before I speak of the possibility of the conflict between Religion and Science, I wish to make it quite clear that many beliefs associated with religious faith in the past must be abandoned. They have had to meet direct Challenge of Science and I believe it is true to say that in every such direct battle, science has been the victor. Let me give definite instances:—

1 First, the earth is not the fixed centre of the Universe; it is merely the moving satellite of a Sun which resembles other suns.

2 Secondly man was specially created.

3 Thirdly, no priest by ritual or formula can attain spiritual properties to inanimate Matter.

4 Fourthly, if by miracles, we mean large scale breaches in the uniformity of nature, such miracles do not occur in human experience. .

Here are four typical remits of Scientific investigation, which at length all must accept. (The Religion and Science - a Symposium, London p. 57)

No comments are necessary. These words coming from the mouth of a thoughtful Bishop are very significant to which we invite the attention

of all our Christian friends.

The same is the case with many dogmas and beliefs of our Mohammedan friends who believe implicitly in the Holy Quran which according to them says;—

"Those who reject our signs, we shall soon cast them into the fire. As soon as their skins are wasted through; we shall change them for fresh skins that they may taste the penalty, for God is exalted in power wise...

(Yusuf Airs Translation of the Quran, Vol-I, P. 197)

64. "Verily God has cursed the un-believers and prepared for them a Blazing Fire.

65. To dwell therein forever, no protector will they find.

66. The day that their faces will be turned upside down in fire, they will say —

"Woe to us, would that we had obeyed God and obeyed the Apostle."

(Holy Quran Translated by Yusuf Ali Vol. Ml P. 1121).

No such intolerant teachings are found in the Vedas which enjoin upon us to regard all beings on earth as our friends (yaj. 36 11) and which are quite in harmony with reason and science as pointed out before. It is therefore quite reasonable to regard the Vedas as the Universal Revealed Scriptures.